

# Project Utkarsh Educates Tribal Youth

Baran - Rajasthan

**T**he city of Baran in Rajasthan primarily houses a tribal population while half the area of the district lies barren. Literacy rates in the district, especially woman literacy rates, are low and digital literacy is a remote dream.

Since 2006, Government provided Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure, including computer labs with minimum 10 computers, projector, internet connection and power back-up in over 7,200 Government schools of Rajasthan including 105 Government schools in Baran district.

However, utilisation level of these computer labs by both teachers and students was very low, resulting in inactive computer labs. Thus, there was an urgent need to integrate technology at the grass root level for digital empowerment and creation of a strong learning ecosystem. Project Utkarsh was launched to leverage the underutilised ICT infrastructure and address the need for digitally empowered youth in rural areas.

The project was initiated as a mission to bring qualitative and accountable change to mass school education through technology and quiz-based learning. The programme is designed to leverage ICT labs and infrastructure for hands-on skill building, curiosity-driven teaching and learning with content in local language, building a scientific temperament, capacity building, assessment and performance benchmarking, remote monitoring, data-driven administrative





### CHALLENGES FACED

- Utilisation levels of technology infrastructure by teachers and students were generally low
- There was no effective way for the government to track ICT infrastructure usage or measure the impact on student learning outcomes
- Lack of teaching staff at school level, and unawareness about effective usage of latest teaching aids

### FINAL OUTCOMES

- The first year targets in terms of ICT lab revival, virtual school setup, students and teachers participation, formal assessments, etc., achieved way more than double
- There was 18.89% increase in new admissions as well as 9.29% improvement in class ten board results in Project Utkarsh enabled schools in comparison to previous year data
- Students received real-time performance feedback; access to online databanks and literary/visual learning resources well beyond standard textbook material; customised practice tests and preparatory workbooks for competitive national exams
- Teachers were able to easily assess student performance through online assessment tools that could algorithmically capture and process large amounts of data; efficiently administer classroom assignments and examinations; provide students with specific feedback

empowerment and establishing accountability.

In Baran district, 105 ICT-enabled Government schools were selected for implementation. All of these schools were provided access to the virtual smart-class setup and also with district dashboard for remote monitoring. More than 10,000 students were provided with a direct access to smart-classes and 500 teachers were trained for long-term capacity building.

Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education (RBSE) made provision for curriculum mapped digital content in Hindi, covering all subjects for students of classes nine and ten.

Curriculum based learning has helped build a strong learning culture by making students more curious, confident, engaging and playful.